

From: James Kenney/DC/USEPA/US
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To: Andrew Stewart
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Subject: PADEP & Methane fingerprinting

Ex. 5 - Deliberative

DEP Announces Plans to Provide Dimock Residents Safe, Reliable Water Supply

DEP Secretary John Hanger said this week that the state and the PA American Water Company will build a water line to serve residents of Dimock, Susquehanna County, whose water supplies were contaminated by natural gas migrating from poorly constructed wells built by Cabot Oil & Gas Corp.

"The residents of Dimock have waited long enough for Cabot to provide a permanent solution to the gas migration issues that have plagued this community's water supplies. The problems in Dimock were caused by Cabot's failure to construct their natural gas wells properly, and we are holding them responsible for the damage caused by these wells," said Hanger, who stressed that DEP will work aggressively to recover the costs of the project from Cabot.

DEP has collected ample evidence tying methane found in private water supplies to the gas wells owned and operated by Cabot. Agency inspectors have witnessed and chronicled gas bubbling and high pressure readings from a number of wells, and taken readings that show excessive gas levels in water wells that could not be present absent a leaking gas well. Additionally, the department performed isotopic analyses in January 2009 on gas found in 5 homes, as well as on gas found to be leaking from nearby Cabot wells. Isotopic analyses essentially "fingerprint" gas samples; the investigation found that the fingerprints of the gas at the homes and from the leaking wells matched.